

REMARKS

Reconsideration of the instant application is respectfully requested. The present submission is responsive to the Final Office Action of March 15, 2005, in which claims 1, 9 and 17 are presently pending. Of those, claims 1 and 9 remain rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(a) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent 6,656,019 to Chen, et al. (Chen '019), as more specifically set forth in paragraph 2, page 2 of the final action. Furthermore, claim 17 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Chen '019. For the following reasons, however, it is respectfully submitted that the application is in condition for allowance.

In a telephone interview between the Examiner and the undersigned on May 3, 2005 (a summary of which was mailed by the Office on May 6, 2005), the Chen '019 reference was discussed with regard to the location of concentric circles and grooves in relationship to the polishing and platen sides of the CMP pad disclosed therein. An agreement was reached as to the disposition of claims 1, 9 and 17 with respect to Chen. A copy of the claims as presently pending is provided herein.

The claims of the instant application recite that the second (polishing) side of the CMP pad include the concentric circular grooves while the first (platen) side of the CMP pad include the corresponding aligned holes. In Chen '019, grooves are taught on the platen side of the pad, or on both the platen and polishing sides of the pad. Chen provides holes on the polishing side of the pad for communication with grooves on the platen side of the pad. Although Chen indicates that additional holes may be formed on the platen side, it is further indicated that the purpose of such holes are for "receptacles for probes capable of detecting the end point or completion of the polishing process, or a minimum groove depth indicating excessive wear of the pad." (col. 9, lines 59-62)

Accordingly, since claims 1, 9 and 17 are distinguished over Chen in this regard, the Applicants respectfully traverse the outstanding §102 and §103 rejections thereto.

For the above stated reasons, it is respectfully submitted that the present application is now in condition for allowance. No new matter has been entered and no additional fees are believed to be required. However, if any fees are due with respect to this Amendment, please charge them to Deposit Account No. 06-1130 maintained by Applicant's attorneys.

Respectfully submitted,
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